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Peacebuilding Commission

Seventh session
Organizational Committee

Summary record of the 1st meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 28 January 2013, at 11 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Momen ..... (Bangladesh)
later: Mr. Vilović ..... (Croatia)

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The meeting was called to order at 11.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda (PBC/7/OC/1)

1. *The agenda was adopted.*

Draft report of the Peacebuilding Commission on its sixth session (PBC/6/OC/L.2)

2. **The Chair** recalled that the text of the draft report of the Peacebuilding Commission on its sixth session (PBC/6/OC/L.2) had already been provisionally approved by the Organizational Committee during informal consultations held on 19 December 2012, pending its translation into all United Nations official languages. It was his understanding that the Committee was now ready to adopt the draft report.

3. *It was so decided.*

Election of the Chair and members of the Chairs' Group

4. **The Chair** said that, in view of prior consultations among regional groups and members of the Organizational Committee, it was his understanding that the Committee was prepared to elect the new Chair and Vice-Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission.

5. *Mr. Vilović (Croatia) was elected Chair for a one-year term ending on 31 December 2013.*

6. *Mr. Momen (Bangladesh) was elected Vice-Chair for a one-year term ending on 31 December 2013.*

7. **The Chair** said that a nomination for a second Vice-Chair from the Group of Latin American and Caribbean Countries (GRULAC) was still pending and he therefore invited the Committee to defer action on that matter to a later date. It was also his understanding that the Committee had agreed that the Chairs of the country-specific configurations should be elected from among the members of either the Organizational Committee or the country-specific configuration that they would be chairing.

8. *It was so decided.*

9. *Mr. Seger (Switzerland) was re-elected as Chair of the Burundi configuration; Ms. Ribeiro Viotti (Brazil) was re-elected as Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration; Mr. Tillander (Sweden) was re-elected as Chair of the Liberia configuration; Ms. Lucas (Luxembourg) was re-elected as the Chair of the Guinea configuration; and Mr. Rishchynski (Canada) was re-elected as Chair of the Sierra Leone configuration.*

10. *Mr. Nishida (Japan) was re-elected as Chair of the Working Group on Lessons Learned for a one-year term ending on 31 December 2013.*

11. **The Chair** recalled that Belgium had resigned as Chair of the Central African Republic configuration on 1 June 2012 and consultations were being held to identify a successor for formal appointment by the Organizational Committee. In accordance with rule 1 (c) of the Commission's provisional rules of procedure, the incoming Chair of the Commission would therefore preside over the Central African Republic configuration until a new Chair for that configuration had been elected.

Statement by the outgoing Chair

12. **The Chair** said that over the past year the Commission had improved its relations with the Security Council, engaged in dialogue with the World Bank and the African Union and consolidated its relationship with the African Development Bank (ADB). It had also held its first coordination meeting with the Special Representatives and Special Envoys of the Secretary-General and the Peacebuilding Fund Advisory Group. The new format of the annual report on the Commission's work demonstrated that the Commission was adapting to lessons learned as it strived to meet the needs and expectations of the countries on its agenda.

13. In 2012, the Commission had embarked on an ambitious work programme designed to take forward relevant recommendations from the 2010 review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture on the basis of the road map of actions in 2012. Collective responsibility and commitment of the membership were crucial and in 2013 the Commission would focus on translating that commitment into concrete actions and contributions. It was especially urgent to reinvigorate commitment to peacebuilding at the highest political level, since the lack of strong political support from capitals was undermining the Commission's potential to make a tangible impact in the field. To that end, the high-level event on "Peacebuilding: the way towards sustainable peace and security", had been held in September 2012 to bring together, for the first time, a number of Heads of State and Government, Ministers and senior officials from

among the Commission's broader membership, and the political declaration adopted had laid the foundation for a political narrative and reference point on peacebuilding.

14. The Commission had also focused on strengthening its relationship with the Security Council. Suggestions for energizing relations had been submitted to the Security Council and the Chairs of the country configurations on Liberia and Sierra Leone had given a briefing on specific issues of interest to the Council in the context of the mandate renewal of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) and the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL). In addition, the Working Group on Lessons Learned had identified ways in which the Commission could demonstrate its value added through its advisory role to the Security Council on transitions of United Nations missions in countries on the agenda. In addition to deepening political commitment to peacebuilding, the Commission had focused on its role in marshalling resources, including taking the initial steps to define its niche in that area. In 2013 the Commission should continue to support national Governments in managing and coordinating aid and resource flows, identifying gaps in international assistance and devising effective national resource mobilization strategies. It should also deepen partnerships with international and regional financial institutions and non-traditional actors such as private corporations and philanthropic organizations, and work to promote a new paradigm for South-South and triangular cooperation. Initiatives to support the development of national capacities for aid coordination and management included the pilot resource mapping exercise in Guinea undertaken by the Working Group on Lessons Learned and the Guinea configuration, and the aid information management system (AIMS) being developed in Liberia with support from the European Union.

15. The partnership with the World Bank and the African Development Bank had continued to evolve in 2012. The Commission's work on the future role of South-South and triangular cooperation for peacebuilding was in its early stages, but discussions had been held with the steering committee on civilian capacity in the aftermath of conflict and the Commission planned to advance that collaboration in 2013 through the piloting of specific initiatives in countries on its agenda. The Organizational Committee must continue to play a key role in promoting institutional consolidation and collaboration and, to that end, clearly established working methods were needed. The Commission should therefore complete the ambitious exercise of streamlining its methods.

16. Bangladesh remained fully committed to supporting the countries on the Commission's agenda, not least because it had itself emerged from a devastating war of independence to become a thriving economy. Peacebuilding was essential and, with assistance, those countries and other post-conflict nations would be able to replicate the success of Bangladesh and achieve sustainable peace and development. In 2013, priority should be placed on people's empowerment as a means of establishing long-lasting peace.

17. *Mr. Vilović (Croatia) took the Chair.*

Statement by the incoming Chair

18. **The Chair** said that the Commission's achievements would be measured by its ability to bring about tangible results on the ground in the countries on its agenda. As Vice-Chair the previous year Croatia had already been fully involved in the Commission's work and had gained valuable experience that would be helpful over the coming year. The Commission should therefore continue that practice and it was hoped that a Vice-Chair from the Latin American and Caribbean region would soon be nominated and elected and subsequently nominated the following year as Chair.

19. As a country that had successfully emerged from a war, Croatia recognized the importance of sharing experiences and helping war-torn countries to overcome challenges, and was therefore fully committed to making a meaningful contribution to peacebuilding efforts in the countries on the agenda, as well as promoting continued development of the Commission's institutional and substantive capacity. In 2013, the Commission would adopt a pragmatic, step-by-step approach to implement the actions agreed in the report on its sixth session (A/67/715–S/2013/63). In particular, it would strive to continue strengthening its relationship with the Security Council and General Assembly to enable it to fully realize its advisory role and vast potential as a central political platform within the United Nations system. It would also work to improve its impact on the ground through in-depth discussions on its working methods, the adoption of

terms of reference for the activities of the Chairs and members of country configurations, the establishment of success criteria for measuring results on the ground and further improvements to the periodic reviews of instruments of engagement and field visits. Broader strategic policy issues would also be tackled, including defining the role of the membership, communications strategy and internal dynamics of the Commission.

20. Resource mobilization would remain high on the agenda and new avenues for partnership with non-traditional actors would be explored, especially the private sector and foundations. The Commission would also work to ensure cohesion between the political, security and development dimensions of peacebuilding and strengthen the capacities of the countries on its agenda. To that end it would deepen cooperation with key peacebuilding actors, including the World Bank, African Development Bank and other international financial institutions. In order to avoid duplication of efforts, the Commission would forge links and create synergies with other relevant global initiatives and processes which could significantly contribute to common peacebuilding efforts in the countries on its agenda. Lastly, the Commission would continue to work closely with the Peacebuilding Support Office to tackle the challenges ahead. However, the Commission was only as strong as the collective strength of its individual members, and countries should therefore ensure that proper attention was paid to peacebuilding efforts in Headquarters, capitals and in the field.

21. **Ms. Cheng-Hopkins** (Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support) commended the strides made over the past year in implementing relevant recommendations from the 2010 review, deepening the Commission's partnership with the World Bank, initiating policy discussions on practical approaches to resource mobilization, strengthening relations with the principal organs of the United Nations and streamlining the Commission's working methods. All were crucial steps in the ongoing efforts to enhance the Commission's impact and value added in the field. However, the highlight of the past year had been the convening of the high-level event on "Peacebuilding: the way towards sustainable peace and security" in September 2012, which had served as a platform for interaction between relevant actors whose efforts and support would be critical to the Commission's work in the future.

22. In 2013, her Office would work to ensure that both the Commission and the Peacebuilding Support Office lived up to expectations, particularly in time for the next joint General Assembly-Security Council review of their work in 2015, and would continue to support members in defining the Commission's niche and tackling challenges to achievement of results in the field. The Commission must demonstrate its ability to leverage the collective experience and resources of its membership and renew the sense of responsibility and commitment from individual members. Countries in the South — particularly those that had logged notable post-conflict successes — could provide guidance and share lessons learned with nations currently on the Commission's agenda. Through such collaborative endeavours the Commission could become a viable and vital platform for South-South and triangular cooperation in support of peacebuilding.

23. Her Office would also support the Commission in developing success criteria for its engagement, improving its working methods, developing lighter forms of engagement and defining an approach to decision-making on exit from the Commission. It was hoped that in 2013 the Commission would also identify initial and practical entry points for engaging with the private sector and philanthropic organizations. It should also strive to improve communications outreach to present its work to a broader external audience. Lastly, her Office would continue to further enhance country-level synergy between the Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund in order to build on the improvements made in that area over the past three years ahead of the global review of the Fund in 2013.

24. **Mr. Khan** (Indonesia) said that his country remained fully committed to the work of the Commission, its country-specific configurations and the Working Group on Lessons Learned. The Commission played a key role in supporting national capacity-building and was an essential platform for fostering direct exchanges among all countries, including those that had undergone a successful transition from conflict to democracy and development. The Commission should strengthen its institutional tools, especially its rules of procedure and working methods. In addition, discussions should be held on the need to convene an annual session to enable greater engagement by relevant stakeholders on the ground and from capitals, which would strengthen the relevance and impact of the Commission's work.

25. **Mr. Laursen** (Denmark) said that his country was a strong supporter of a more ambitious and effective United Nations peacebuilding architecture and was especially keen to see further progress made in increasing the active participation of women in peacebuilding. His delegation would continue to work with all members of the Commission and its partners to deliver results on the ground.

26. **Mr. Mahmoud** (Egypt) said that the Commission should work to raise its profile within the United Nations system and on the international scene through such activities as the high-level event held in New York in September 2012. It should also engage more fully with capital-based officials and with other States that were not members of the Commission. For more resource mobilization, it should not only deepen its cooperation with the African Development Bank and the World Bank, but also approach other institutions, such as the Islamic Development Bank and the new development bank being set up by Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.

27. **Ms. Ribeiro Viotti** (Brazil) said that, as Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration, she hoped that more international assistance would be provided to help restore order and stability to that country. Her delegation would continue to support the Commission's efforts to promote development in the countries on its agenda.

28. **Mr. Andrabi** (Pakistan) said that the Commission should continue to play a leading role in early peacebuilding and in addressing issues confronting all post-conflict countries, not just those on its agenda.

29. **Mr. Haniff** (Malaysia) said that the Commission should leverage its experience and lessons learned to prevent a relapse into conflict in post-conflict countries. It should improve its working methods by establishing a more predictable and streamlined calendar of meetings, cooperate with other United Nations actors, and disseminate its work outside the Organization. His Government would contribute US$5,000 to the Peacebuilding Fund in 2013.

30. **Mr. Okafor** (Nigeria) said that his delegation would continue to play its role in helping to advance the work of the Commission and its country-specific configurations.

31. **Ms. Evstigneeva** (Russian Federation) called on the Commission to improve its working methods, and reiterated her country's full support for the Commission's work.

32. **Mr. Yamazaki** (Japan) said that, as Chair of the Working Group on Lessons Learned, his delegation always drew attention to topics of interest to both the country-specific configurations and the Commission as a whole. The Commission should focus more on resource mobilization, gender issues and enhanced cooperation with other United Nations entities, especially the Security Council. It should also improve its working methods, work more closely with actors in the field, and maintain the meetings usually held between the Chairs' Group and the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General.

33. **Mr. Langeland** (Norway) said that women and civil society should play a greater role in post-conflict situations; the Commission's working methods should be improved; and United Nations country teams and the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General should be given greater support. To mobilize additional resources, non-traditional donor States and the private sector should be encouraged to support the Peacebuilding Fund. He urged all countries to show flexibility in addressing the challenges facing post-conflict countries and to ensure a smooth transition from country-specific configurations to a traditional United Nations presence in those countries.

34. **Mr. Baki** (United Kingdom) said that the Commission should refine its working methods by focusing more on country-specific configurations and the Working Group on Lessons Learned, rather than on Organizational Committee matters. It should also deepen its working relationship with key United Nations actors in the field, especially the senior leadership, and with all post-conflict countries, including the Group of Seven Plus.

35. **Mr. Dugan** (United States of America) said that the Commission should ensure that women played a more active role in its work. It should also work more closely with small businesses and the private sector in post-conflict countries, and deepen its cooperation with other United Nations entities, especially the Security Council.

36. **Ms. Jaraud-Darnault** (France) said that her delegation welcomed the Commission's report, especially its new format. The Commission should continue to strengthen its partnership and synergies with other United Nations actors, donor countries,

members of the international community and international financial institutions, and to consider new options for resource mobilization, including leveraging the private sector and philanthropic organizations. In 2013, it should focus more on strengthening the relationship between its Organizational Committee and the country-specific configurations. In that regard, the mapping exercise conducted in 2012 would be particularly useful.

37. **Mr. Doubane** (Observer for the Central African Republic), while expressing regret that the chair of the Central African Republic configuration remained vacant, said that his delegation appreciated the statement made by the Chair of the Commission at the height of the crisis in the Central African Republic in 2012, which helped to pave the way for peace in that country. He also welcomed the ongoing consultations with the European Union, which should lay the groundwork for the formation of a new Government in the Central African Republic.

38. **Mr. Vrailas** (Observer for the European Union) said that his delegation hoped that the Commission would be able to overcome its challenges in order to make a real difference on the ground in post-conflict countries. He welcomed the road map of actions in 2013 and its emphasis on enhancing the Commission's impact in the field and on strengthening relations with key actors in New York. His delegation recognized the need for pragmatic action and stood ready to play a more active role in the peacebuilding efforts of the United Nations.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.